



## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

**January 13, 2022**

### Dates to Remember:

Monday, January 17 School Board Meeting at 5:30 at BGCS via Zoom  
Tuesday, January 18 MAPS K-5 Reading Test  
Wednesday, January 19 MAPS K-5 Math Test  
Thursday, January 20 MAPS Make Up Testing  
Friday, January 21 No School PD/Workshop for Staff

### Mission Statement:

*Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting allowing students to reach their potential, preparing them to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, lifelong learners.*

From Ms. Diane Blanchette:

*Director, Birch Grove Community School*

*Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service*

**As a reminder, please keep your child home if they show any symptom of illness. Keep your child home if they show any sign of illness and then call your family healthcare provider. You can call or email the school if you are not able to connect with your provider. We want to stay in school and keep the Saplings program open. We can't do this without your help, so please keep your child home if they show any sign of illness. Thank you!**

We will be following the CDC guidelines at this point concerning exposures of Covid. Thank you to the families that are taking precautions and catching things at home before sending your child to school - we all appreciate that, as we want to stay in school and keep the Saplings program open. I have copied a link below for you to access. If you have any questions, please call or email me: 218-663-0170 and/or [birchgrove@boreal.org](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org)

Link: [COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/quarantine-isolation)

If you need a rapid Covid test, I have some here. We will also be receiving a shipment of tests soon, enough to send one home to all of our families. When they are in, a test will be sent home in your child's backpack with their name on it. Keep an eye out for it.

We have been adapting here to the quarantine/isolation of some staff and some students. Thank you to all of the staff for being flexible and making it all happen. Our teachers have been prepared to go to distance learning since the beginning of the school year. We have the best teachers, paraprofessionals and Saplings staff! Please be kind to them and let them know that they are doing a great job - AGAIN!

MAPS testing has been rescheduled to next week on Tuesday (reading), Wednesday (math) and Thursday (make up). Please see that your child gets plenty of sleep the night before testing - it can make a big difference. 😊



Great News! Just announced on January 3:  
BGCS received a \$10,000 grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation to create another formal outdoor space at the "campsite" in the woods behind the building. Both the Campsite Kids summer program and the K-5 elementary program will benefit from this project. Thank you to the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation for investing in Birch Grove's future! We are hoping to start construction in April/May/June - as soon as the weather allows. So excited!

K-5 have been working on building a quinzhee in the woods. Once complete, I will post pictures on the school Facebook page. In the meantime, I do have one I can share with you now.

### Picture of the Week!



Please continue to send winter gear with all Saplings – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. We go outside every day in all but the most extreme weather! K-5 should also be hitting the ice skating rink soon!

One of the joys of living up North -  
Every Friday is “Flannel Friday” at Birch Grove! Join us!



If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

[birchgrove@boreal.org](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org) ~ Birch Grove Community School Email

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218-663-0170 ~ School Phone

218-663-0170 ext. 26 Community Service Phone

Website: [www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)



Birch Grove Community School and Community Service #4145



**From Ms. Alayna Carrier and Ms. Mari Maldonado**

*Sapling Teachers, Birch Grove Community Service*

This week our theme was Animal Tracks. We took a few nature walks with a tracking guide. We noticed a lot of rabbit tracks and maybe even a fox track! The Saplings got their own animal track booklet, we spent time coloring in the footprints and animals while we learned some fun facts about them. We practiced making our own tracks in the snow, and followed a rabbit track into the woods! We’ve talked a bit about different habitats by showing them different habitats, then having Saplings place animals into the correct one.

Our focus this week has been reviewing shapes, colors, and numbers. We’ve done some different worksheets where the Saplings trace a shape and different numbers. The Saplings are working hard on writing their full first name down. We’ve also introduced their last names and started tracing them.

We have been loving extra outside time lately, winter does NOT stop the Saplings crew! Have a great weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher*

K/1 spent most of this week reviewing some key concepts. In language arts, we focused on reviewing phonics, parts of speech, reading comprehension, and fluency. In math, we reviewed addition strategies, place value, and shapes. K/1 has done a great job practicing their skills on seesaw and in the classroom. K/1 has done a really good job with changing plans and routines the last few weeks! It has been really impressive how flexible they have been! Hopefully, we will get back into a regular routine next week!

The warmer weather has made it easier to go outside and enjoy time in the woods. The kids enjoyed a beautiful snowshoe hike and worked on building a quinzhee. Next week we are going to spend some more time outside looking for animal signs.

Have a great weekend and enjoy the warmer weather!

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**From Ms. Sara Silence**

*2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

Well this week it has gotten kind of loud in the classroom. We continued our studies in music by creating our own instruments with easily found supplies. We used our water bottles, beads, rubber bands, and a ruler to make a series of instruments. We were challenged to see how many sounds we could create using those materials. We have been taking a virtual field trip to the Music Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. They have a series of activities for students of all ages that we have been working through. This week focused on sorting instruments by the vibrations they make as well as learning about sound waves.

In math we are preparing for a big change. Now that our multi-digit addition unit is wrapping up, we will switch our focus to multi-digit subtraction and ungrouping. This can be a hard transition because of the need to keep track of the value of numbers as they change places. We started off by introducing the idea of making change in our pretend pet store, Cutie-Co. We will continue with some "shopping" next week.

This week we also started our reading and social studies unit on ancient Rome. So far we have read about daily life and compared how schooling was different and the same for boys and girls. We will also be comparing how daily life and schooling compare to what we do today.

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**From Ms. Heidi Helgesen**

*4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

4/5th grade has continued on with their learning this week. Fourth graders showed what they learned from the past word problems and equations math unit. Students worked hard to read multi-step word problems, write equations, show their work, and give answers as part of a full sentence. Students did a great job remembering all the parts to solving a problem and applying what they have learned! Afterwards, fourth graders started their fractions unit. Students worked to identify the parts of a fraction and add fractions with like-denominators. Students did a good job using the terminology to describe a fraction and practicing these skills.

In fifth grade, students worked to learn more about fractions. Students learned about improper fractions and mixed numbers. They worked to add these fractions with like and unlike denominators. This meant using multiple skills they have learned to solve a problem. Students stuck with it and did a great job applying their understanding of fractions.

In reading, fourth graders read about José Limon, a famous dancer and choreographer from Mexico who followed his dreams to New York City to become one of the greatest dancers in the world. Students worked hard to understand the author's purpose for writing the story and support their understanding with key details from the text. In fifth grade reading, students read a story about cougars. Students worked to understand paragraph structure and identify the main idea of paragraphs and supporting details. Students did a great job analyzing this new text.

We have been having a lot of fun exploring music and art over the past couple weeks. Students have watched parts of the film "Fantasia", exploring how music can tell a story. We have learned about the different parts of a symphony orchestra and the important role of the conductor. During art, we listened to a new symphony piece, Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King," and started to create a story that goes along with the music. Students had fun listening to the piece, identifying the different parts of the story through changes in the music, and starting to create a comic book style story to accompany the music. We are excited to continue to explore the connection between music and art this month!

Thanks so much to parents for helping students come to school ready to explore and play outside. We spend a lot of time outside, so it is super important to make sure that kids have the proper gear to be comfortable going outside. Thank you for your continued support, parents!

As always, please reach out at any time if you have questions or concerns. I am available by both phone and email.

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